

Today's News - Friday, May 24, 2013

EDITOR'S NOTE: We will be observing Memorial Day (U.S.) on Monday, and will return Tuesday, May 28. Happy weekend!

- An in-depth look (and one of the best) at the sad saga of Calatrava's transit hub at Ground Zero, "the most troubled project at one of the world's most troubled construction sites. Once a bird in flight, the Hub has devolved into an immobile, skeletal stegosaurus."
- Kolson Hurley gets "the top five reasons why the suburbs are shaping up as the new frontier" from some "suburban visionaries."
- Arieff is glad to see prefab, a "much-maligned building technology is finding its proper niche" with multifamily housing.
- Kristal gives a standing ovation to Ennead's "revivification" of NYC's Public Theatre, "making the place a crowd-pleaser in every sense."
- Goldhagen x 2: she investigates why, even though "female architects have come a long way, architecture remains rife with discriminatory practices."
- She makes a strong argument for why Denise Scott Brown deserves a Pritzker: "Venturi was awarded...for work he did not do, could not have done, and would never have conceived without her."
- Kennicott is none too pleased that Koshalek plans to quit the Hirshhorn - and even less pleased that the "brilliance of the Bubble idea" by DS+R might burst: it would have had "an outsized impact on architectural thinking in Washington."
- Weekend diversions:
- Hawthorne x 2: He gives us a clue to what's behind all the brouhaha over MOCA's "A New Sculpturalism" show: "Who gets to tell the story of the influence of members of the 'L.A. school,' and how it is told, are at the heart of the controversy."
- He cheers the MAK Center's "Everything Loose Will Land": it is "a wry study of the ways Los Angeles artists and architects worked with, leaned on, stole from and influenced one another in the 1970s...a provocation and an example of smart, assured curating all at once."
- A new Turrell retrospective at LACMA explores nearly 50 years of his career + link to excerpt from Govan's exhibition catalogue essay.
- "See/Change" at NYC's South Street Seaport hopes to lure back New Yorkers with pop-up boutiques in shipping containers, outdoor film screenings, and "the lords of artificial weather willing, there may be glitter rain."
- Two takes on "Kapoor in Berlin": it's "the best show he has yet put on" (and he minces no words about the U.K.'s treatment of the arts and education - both get pushed "into the corner") + "Is his first major museum show in Germany also an exercise in sculptural muscle-flexing?"
- Bey cheers "Theaster Gates: 13th Ballad" at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago that raises "important questions about the reuse of buildings and the use of art to uplift and create 'place' in marginalized urban areas."
- Szenasy says that in "A Country of Cities" Chakrabarti's "voice is strong and resonant - with pleasing lucidity" + a most excellent excerpt.
- Saffron says Heller's bio of Bacon "is a good start at filling in the vast gaps in Bacon-ology" that "doesn't buy into the revisionist narrative of him as an all-powerful master builder" (though the "lack of critical evaluation is frustrating").
- BMW Guggenheim Lab publishes New York and Mumbai Lab Editions of "100 Urban Trends: A Glossary of Urban Trends" (with link to glossaries).
- "Composing Space" showcases the stunning architectural photography of Hélène Binet: "Pitting two dimensions against each other, her pictures seize empty spaces and fold, braid and twist them into knots."

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PATH/Fail: The Story of the World's Most Expensive Train Station: ...the most troubled project at one of the world's most troubled construction sites...the World Trade Center...will be far and away the most expensive train station built in modern history...Once a bird in flight, the Hub has devolved into an immobile, skeletal stegosaurus..."At the end of the day, we didn't fail — it got built." By Stephen Jacob Smith -- Santiago Calatrava - New York Observer

Don't Forget the Burbs: The global age of the city is upon us. But as June Williamson reminds us, architects and designers shouldn't give up on the quest to retrofit suburbia...Williamson and suburban visionaries such as Alexander D'Hooghe...and Garth Rockcastle...identify the top five reasons why the suburbs are shaping up as the new frontier. By Amanda Kolson Hurley -- Tobias Holler/Holler Architecture; AB Architekten; Ellen Dunham-Jones; Dub Studios; Alexander D'Hooghe; Meyer, Scherer & Rockcastle [images]- Architect Magazine

Prefab Lives! It's an exciting time for modular building...I am glad to see the much-maligned building technology finding its proper niche...prefab has long been promising better design and innovation and...a more affordable path to good architecture...Prefab is best utilized in the design and construction...of multifamily housing...makes sense for many reasons. By Allison Arieff -- SHoP Architects; nARCHITECTS; GRO Architects; GLUCK+; Marmol Radziner Architects; Resolution: 4 Architecture [images]- New York Times

Going Public: Ennead Architects' Ovation-Worthy Renovation of The Public Theatre revivification of the structure's entry and lobby have dramatically expanded the Public's public component--making the place...a crowd-pleaser in every sense. By Marc Kristal -- Giorgio Cavaglieri [images]- UnBeige

Crashing the Boys' Club: In the 45 years since Denise Scott Brown came on the scene, female architects have come a long way. Or have they? ...serious obstacles remain...Architecture remains rife with discriminatory practices. Why? By Sarah Williams Goldhagen- Architectural Record

Yes, Denise Scott Brown Deserves a Pritzker Prize: Never mind the politics: She shared the work with her husband. She should share the prize, too...no one has asked whether or not Scott Brown deserves a Pritzker...Robert Venturi was awarded...for work he did not do, could not have done, and would never have conceived without Scott Brown...for god's sake, give the prize to what is literally in this case the firm's better half. By Sarah Williams Goldhagen- The New Republic

Hirshhorn Museum would go back to square one if Smithsonian bursts the Bubble: ...board deadlocked on whether to forge ahead with the avant-garde inflatable structure...Richard Koshalek announced...he'll quit later this year...The brilliance of the Bubble idea, as designed by Diller Scofidio + Renfro, is that it would cost less than one-tenth of...the Frank Gehry wing at the Corcoran, yet would have an outsized impact on architectural thinking in Washington. By Philip Kennicott- Washington Post

The Controversy Over L.A.'s "A New Sculpturalism" Show: Its main story line was to be the complex influence...members of the "L.A. school" have had on more than two dozen younger architects...Who gets to tell that story, and how it is told, are at the heart of the controversy surrounding the MOCA show. By Christopher Hawthorne [slide show]- Architectural Record

L.A. artists, architects' effect on each other at MAK Center exhibit: "Everything Loose Will Land"...is the most opinionated of the exhibitions in the Getty series "Pacific Standard Time Presents"...a wry study of the ways Los Angeles artists and architects worked with, leaned on, stole from and influenced one another in the 1970s...a provocation and an example of smart, assured curating all at once. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Sylvia Lavin; Robert Irwin; Robert Venturi; Denise Scott Brown;

Charles Moore; Cesar Pelli; Frank Gehry; Thom Mayne; etc.- Los Angeles Times

"James Turrell: A Retrospective" explores nearly 50 years in the career of a key artist in the Southern California Light and Space movement of the 1960s and 70s; opens May 26 + link to excerpt from Michael Govan's essay "Inner Light" from the exhibition catalogue.- Los Angeles County Museum of Art | LACMA

At Hurricane-Ravaged South Street Seaport, New Forecast Calls for Glitter Rain: ...there shall be pop-up boutiques housed in shipping containers...outdoor film screenings with lounge-chair seating...And, the lords of artificial weather willing, there may be glitter rain...See/Change will try to lure New Yorkers to the banks of the East River... [images]- New York Times

Anish Kapoor in Berlin: 'in short, Britain's f*cked': "Kapoor in Berlin" is the best show he has yet put on, which may have much to do with the fact that he feels Germany demonstrates a huge degree of respect for the arts – in stark contrast to Britain..."The UK has two things, the arts and education, and both of them it pushes into the corner." By Kate Connolly- Guardian (UK)

"Kapoor in Berlin" [at Martin-Gropius-Bau]: Some of Anish Kapoor's ventures into gigantism have been questionable successes. Think of the gruesomely entitled ArcelorMittal Orbit...he is a master of the sculptural spectacle. But is he much more than this? It entirely depends upon what freight of significant meaning you decide to load him with. By Michael Glover- Independent (UK)

"Theaster Gates: 13th Ballad": ...both "13th Ballad" and "12 Ballads for the Huguenot House" raise important questions about the reuse of buildings and the use of art to uplift and create "place" in marginalized urban areas. [at Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago] By Lee Bey [slide show]- Architectural Record

Of Trains, Towers, and Trees: "A Country of Cities: A Manifesto for Urban America" by Vishaan Chakrabarti...puts forth a convincing and well reasoned argument for an urbanized America in the 21st century. His voice is strong and resonant...with pleasing lucidity, says Susan S. Szenasy [excerpt]- Metropolis Magazine

Edmund Bacon, doer: A new biography of the great city planner is welcome and timely amid today's visions of urban design...Gregory L. Heller's "Ed Bacon"...doesn't buy into the revisionist narrative of Bacon as an all-powerful master builder. He sees him primarily as a design visionary with a deep understanding of how cities ought to look and function. By Inga Saffron- Philadelphia Inquirer

BMW Guggenheim Lab Publishes New York and Mumbai Lab Editions of "100 Urban Trends: A Glossary of Urban Trends" from the BMW Guggenheim Lab: ...round out a series of glossaries showcasing the most talked-about urban trends from the Lab's three global stops to date... [link to glossaries]- BMW Guggenheim Lab

Dancing in the Dark: The Architectural Photography of Hélène Binet: Pitting two dimensions against each other, her pictures seize empty spaces and fold, braid and twist them into knots. For her, light has material properties — cutting like a scythe or covering like a blanket...a new monograph..."Composing Space," is about bending preconceptions. [slide show]- New York Times

-- SANA: Musée Louvre-Lens, Lens, France
-- Moving. Norman Foster on Art, Carré d'Art, Nîmes Museum of Contemporary Art, Nîmes, France
-- Ingarden & Ewy: The Malopolska Garden of Arts, Krakow, Poland

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